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## GIL BLAS AND DON SYLVIO

Borrowings—in some cases mere reminiscences—from Cervantes, Fielding, Lucian, and the French *Contes des Fées* have been pointed out by various students of *Don Sylvio*,<sup>1</sup> but the influence of Le Sage seems not to have been noticed. This is most easily detected by a comparison of the proper names in *Don Sylvio* with those of *Gil Blas*. Of the geographical names in *Don Sylvio*, including those of noble families derived from them, all but three or four have their counterpart in Le Sage's masterpiece. It is true, not much stress can be laid on those of the well-known cities or provinces, such as Valencia, Andalusia, Madrid, Seville, Toledo, Grenada: in addition to these, however, we find Xelva, I, 8 = *GB* I, 510;<sup>2</sup> Guzman, I, 150 = *GB* I, 291; Lirias, I, 289 = *GB* II, 276; Zuniga, I, 311 = *GB* II, 431; Leyva, I, 366 = *GB* I, 402; Medina-Sidonia, I, 366 = *GB* II, 91; Zamora, II, 154 = *GB* I, 190; Calatrava, II, 137 = *GB* I, 433; Jutella, II, 370 = *GB* II, 545.<sup>3</sup>

The identity of the personal names is still more striking: Alexis, I, 309 = *GB* II, 382; Antonia, II, 370 = *GB* II, 336; Arsenia, II, 145 = *GB* I, 227; Beatrix, I, 76 = *GB* I, 373; Blas, I, 222 = *GB* I, 5; Dorothea, II, 370 = *GB* II, 547; Felicia, I, 293 = *GB* II, 236; Felix, II, 369 = *GB* I, 350; Fernand, I, 374 = *GB* I, 402; Gabriel, I, 361 = *GB* II, 106; Hyacinthe, I, 360 = *GB* I, 107; Iago, I, 224 = *GB* II, 137; Laura, I, 282 = *GB* I, 245; Leonora, I, 311 = *GB* I, 397; Mencia, I, 3 = *GB* I, 57; Mergelina, I, 116 = *GB* I, 164; Pedrillo, I, 65 = *GB* II, 86; Rodrigo, I, 114

<sup>1</sup> The literature in question is cited in my article on "The Sources of Wieland's *Don Sylvio*," *Modern Philology*, Vol. xvi.

<sup>2</sup> For *Don Sylvio* the second edition (Leipzig, 1772) is cited, while *GB* I, *GB* II denote respectively vols. II, III of the *Œuvres de A. René Le Sage*, Paris, 1828. Some of the names in question recur again and again, but only a single instance has here been cited.

<sup>3</sup> The only names of this kind not found in *Gil Blas* are: Cardena, I, 293; Montesa, I, 375; Villa Hermosa, II, 123, and Rosalva, the family-name of Don Sylvio.

= GB II, 87; Seraphina, II, 177 = GB I, 395; Stella, II, 123 = GB II, 39.<sup>4</sup>

Some of these names, again, are of common occurrence; but, on the other hand, why should Wieland have taken just these, in preference to scores of others available? Furthermore, several of them are not at all of frequent occurrence, *e. g.*, Arsenia, Seraphina, Mergelina. The latter name, in particular, is so uncommon, that Tropsch thought it was derived from *Don Quixote*: "Cervantes' *Pelerina* ist das Vorbild für Wielands *Mergelina*. Man beachte die völlige Übereinstimmung der Vokale und die teilweise der Konsonanten in beiden Namen!"<sup>5</sup>

Here we have complete identity. In a number of cases, furthermore, not merely the names, but also the functions of the characters agree: Arsenia, for example, appears in both stories as an actress; Beatrix and Laura, in *Gil Blas*, are ladies' maids, just as in *Don Sylvio*; Mergelina, in *Gil Blas*, is a married woman bent upon gaining the love of Diego, a young barber; Pedrillo, in each story, is the name of a servant; Seraphina, in Le Sage's story, is the daughter of the Count de Polan, and marries Alphonse de Leyva, the benefactor of Gil Blas: with Wieland, Seraphina is the baptismal name of Don Sylvio's sister, Hyacinthe being the name given her by the old gipsy; Estelle, in *Gil Blas*, is the stage-name of the former ladies' maid Laura: in *Don Sylvio*, Stella is the companion of Hyacinthe when she leaves the house of the gipsy, just before she makes her appearance on the stage.

Estelle, moreover, appears as the companion of the virtuous young actress Lucrece, who, after her betrayal into the hands of the king, "s'enferma dans le monastère de l'Incarnation, où bientôt elle

<sup>4</sup> The only personal names not found in *Gil Blas* are: Miguel, I, 293; Eugenio, I, 296 (cf. however Eugenia GB II, 215); Isidora, II, 418; Mari-torne, I, 39; Sanchez, I, 114; Teresilla, I, 364, and the name of the hero himself. The names of witches, fairies, and the like, the sources of which Wieland frequently gives in foot-notes, have of course been omitted here.

<sup>5</sup> "Wielands Don Sylvio und Cervantes' Don Quijote," *Euphorion*, 4. Ergänzungsheft (1899), p. 39. The name Mergelina goes back ultimately to Vincente de Espinel's *Relaciones de la vida y aventuras del Escudero Marcos de Obregon*, from which Le Sage drew the story in which Mergelina figures. Cf. GB I, 164, foot-notes. Similarly, the name Fanferlüsche, which Wieland (I, 37, foot-note) traces back to the *Contes des Fées*, appears already in the opening chapter of Rabelais' *Gargantua*.

tomba malade et mourut de chagrin" (*GB* II, 508). The story of Hyacinthe seems to preserve certain reminiscences of this same Lucrece, since she also finds "eine Gesellschaft von Schauspielern, in dieser Gesellschaft einen wahren Phönix, eine geistvolle und tugendhafte Schauspielerin, in dieser Schauspielerin eine sehr eyfrige Freundin und Beschützerin" (II, 138). . . . "sie blieb unbeweglich bey ihrem Entschlusse, wenn sie Arsenien verlieren sollte, sich in ein Kloster zu begeben" (II, 163). The scene of her theatrical career is Grenada, which city figures largely in the theatrical adventures of *Gil Blas* (*GB* II, 33-79). The old gipsy, likewise, is motivated in *Gil Blas*, in that Scipio's mother is of this race, and tells fortunes (*GB* II, 352 f.). Hyacinthe's foster-mother also teaches her this art: [ich] "prophezeyhte aus der Hand und aus dem Caffeesatz, so gut als irgend eine Zigäunerin in der Welt" (II, 98).

At least one verbal similarity is likewise to be noted: Don Francisco de Zuniga, when asked his name, replies (*GB* II, 221): "L'on m'appeloit Francillo dans mon enfance. . . ." In the same way Pedrillo states (I, 288): ". . . wurde ich Pedro getauft; aber wie ich klein war, nannten sie mich Pedrillo."

The most striking proof, however, of Wieland's acquaintance with *Le Sage* is found in the statements made by Eugenio and Felicia. In the latter part of Book VI, Don Eugenio says to Don Sylvio:

Ich wette was man will, Sie glaubten bey dem Eintritt in diese Gärten, und bey dem Eintritte des Pavillions, in einen Feensitz gekommen zu seyn; und doch ist nichts gewissers, als dass sie in eben diesem Lirias sind, welches mein Grossvater Gil-Blas von Santillane der dankbaren Grossmuth des Don Alphonso von Leyva zu danken hatte, und welches seit dem theils von ihm theils von meinem Vater Don Felix von Lirias erweitert und verschönert worden. . . . Gestehen sie, Don Sylvio, dass sie bey Erblickung meiner Schwester keinen Augenblick anstunden, sie für eine Fee zu halten; und doch kann ihnen mein Pfarrer mit dem Taufregister beweisen, dass sie eine Sterbliche ist, und von guten alten Christen abstammt, die niemalsen der Magie verdächtig gewesen sind; eine Enkelin der liebenswürdigen Dorothea von Jutella, welche bestimmt war, meinem Grossvater den Verlust seiner geliebten Antonia zu ersetzen, und mit der sie in der That eine so grosse Aehnlichkeit hat, dass man das Bildniss der einen für der andern ihres hält (II, 369 f.).

A little later, Felicia gives Don Sylvio further information about the portrait:

Sie irren sich, Don Sylvio, erwiderte Felicia; dieses hier, welches sie für das meinige ansehen, ist wenigstens sechzig Jahre älter. Es stellt meine Grossmutter Donna Dorothea von Jutella vor, so wie sie in einem Alter von sechzehn Jahren war. . . . Mein Grossvater, der seine Gemahlin ausserordentlich liebte, liess das kleine Gemälde machen, das in ihre Hände gekommen ist, und pflegte es, nach der Mode seiner Zeit an einer goldnen Kette zu tragen. Er hinterliess es meiner Mutter, und da es von dieser auf mich kam, so hieng ich es an diese Perlenschnure, und trug es so lange als ein Halsgeschmeide, bis ich es vor etlichen Tagen in dem nemlichen Walde verlor, wo sie es bald darauf gefunden haben müssen (II, 404 ff.).

All the above statements—the only strange thing is that no one seems hitherto to have observed the fact—harmonize perfectly with Le Sage's story: here, Don Alphonse de Leyva presents Gil Blas with the estate of Lirias, "à quatre lieues de Valence . . . sur les bords de Guadalaviar" (*GB* II, 276 f.). Antonia is the first wife of Gil Blas, whose death follows close upon that of her infant son, "un événement que plus de vingt années n'ont pu me faire oublier, et qui sera toujours présent à ma pensée" (*GB* II, 419). Dorothée de Jutella, some years later, becomes the second wife of Gil Blas (*GB* II, 552), who ends his narrative with the statement that heaven has blessed him with two children (*GB* II, 553).

Wieland assigns to one of these—in *Gil Blas* neither name nor sex is stated—the name of Don Felix von Lirias, the father of Don Eugenio and Donna Felicia. His story is thus, in a way, a sequel to that of Le Sage, in that two of the principal characters are represented as the grandchildren of Gil Blas, while the entire scene of the action is identical with that portrayed by the French author. At first glance these statements may seem to amount to a new charge of plagiarism against Wieland, but here, as in the case of Cervantes, Fielding, Bougeant, and Lucian, he has merely taken his materials where he happened to find them—the work itself is entirely his own.

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